

## COURSE OUTLINE

ANM100

# Animal Ecology Field Course

**School:** School of Science, Technology and Engineering

2026 | Trimester 1

UniSC Sunshine Coast

UniSC Moreton Bay

UniSC Fraser Coast

BLENDED  
LEARNING

Most of your course is on campus but you may be able to do some components of this course online.

*Please go to [usc.edu.au](http://usc.edu.au) for up to date information on the teaching sessions and campuses where this course is usually offered.*

## 1. What is this course about?

### 1.1. Description

Animal ecologists are passionate, field-orientated scientists, who work in a broad variety of industries across a diverse range of animal groups and ecosystems. This practical and exciting field course will introduce you to the discipline of animal ecology and engage you directly in studying animals in some of the unique coastal ecosystems of Australia. You will spend several days in the field where you will be exposed to hot topics in contemporary animal ecology research, using multiple techniques to survey animals in marine, freshwater, and terrestrial habitats.

### 1.2. How will this course be delivered?

ACTIVITY	HOURS	BEGINNING WEEK	FREQUENCY
<b>BLENDED LEARNING</b>			
Learning materials – Pre-recorded weekly material	1hr	Week 2	8 times
Seminar – On campus seminars	1hr	Week 1	3 times
Fieldwork – Field course is usually booked to commence late Week 3 of trimester and finish on the following week. Each student cohort (3) will attend one of the two night rotations only, but will need to be available to possibly attend any of them.	24hrs	Week 4	Once Only
Tutorial/Workshop 1 – On campus tutorial	1hr	Week 2	6 times
Tutorial/Workshop 2 – On campus specialised tutorial	2hrs	Week 3	4 times

### 1.3. Course Topics

In this course you will:

1. Discover the evolutionary and functional foundations of animal ecology;
2. Apply modern techniques for studying animals in the wild in a hands-on fashion;
4. Learn how to apply field skills to answer fundamental questions about biodiversity and conservation;
5. Value the importance of high ethical standards that underpin all work done by animal ecologists; and
6. Engage in field-based research activities that involve you in the discipline of animal ecology in a tangible and practical way.

## 2. What level is this course?

100 Level (Introductory)

Engaging with discipline knowledge and skills at foundational level, broad application of knowledge and skills in familiar contexts and with support. Limited or no prerequisites. Normally, associated with the first full-time study year of an undergraduate program.

## 3. What is the unit value of this course?

12 units

## 4. How does this course contribute to my learning?

COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES	GRADUATE QUALITIES
On successful completion of this course, you should be able to...	Completing these tasks successfully will contribute to you becoming...
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>① Demonstrate and apply knowledge about; a) the fundamentals of animal ecology as a scientific discipline; b) the questions it asks; c) the evolutionary processes that shape it; and d) the techniques used to study it.</li></ul>	Knowledgeable
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>② Communicate effectively and professionally.</li></ul>	Empowered
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>③ Systematise and analyse; a) core concepts in animal ecology science; b) the adaptations of animals to their environment, c) biological and ecological levels of organisation, and d) processes that shape the structure of animal communities.</li></ul>	Knowledgeable Creative and critical thinker Sustainability-focussed

## 5. Am I eligible to enrol in this course?

Refer to the [UniSC Glossary of terms](#) for definitions of “pre-requisites, co-requisites and anti-requisites”.

### 5.1. Pre-requisites

Must be enrolled in SB303, SC320, SC012, SC107 or UC103

### 5.2. Co-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.3. Anti-requisites

Not applicable

### 5.4. Specific assumed prior knowledge and skills (where applicable)

Not applicable

## 6. How am I going to be assessed?

### 6.1. Grading Scale

Standard Grading (GRD)

High Distinction (HD), Distinction (DN), Credit (CR), Pass (PS), Fail (FL).

### 6.2. Details of early feedback on progress

A formative fieldwork notebook is completed, and reviewed, during the field course. A formative practice exam will be conducted in class. Feedback will also be given via a summative fieldwork quiz.

### 6.3. Assessment tasks

DELIVERY MODE	TASK NO.	ASSESSMENT PRODUCT	INDIVIDUAL OR GROUP	WEIGHTING %	WHAT IS THE DURATION / LENGTH?	WHEN SHOULD I SUBMIT?	WHERE SHOULD I SUBMIT IT?
All	1	Quiz/zes	Individual	20%	30 minutes	Week 6	Online Test (Quiz)
All	2	Oral	Group	30%	10 minutes (+/- 10%).	Week 9	In Class
All	3	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	Individual	50%	1 hour	Exam Period	Online Test (Quiz)

#### All - Assessment Task 1: Fieldwork Quiz

<b>GOAL:</b>	Demonstrate your understanding of key research skills and methods that are used to study animals in their environment and the ability to collect and accurately record ecological data.	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Quiz/zes	
<b>FORMAT:</b>	An online multiple choice exam based on the research questions, ecological studies and survey methods covered on the field course.	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	No.	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1 Demonstrate your knowledge of field ecology, including research questions and hypotheses, experimental design, and survey techniques and methodologies.	1
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Organisation	

#### All - Assessment Task 2: Seminar

<b>GOAL:</b>	Demonstrate your ability to communicate professionally and accurately the important facts and concepts associated with research activities and techniques in animal ecology.	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Oral	
<b>FORMAT:</b>	Oral presentation introducing a chosen research question, describing the research techniques used to answer this question, and summarising the results of data collected on this topic during the Field Course. This presentation will be in the form of a standard seminar/talk supported by PowerPoint slides, and will be required to be delivered in class during scheduled tutorial times in Week 9.	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	No.	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1 Introduce the research question and clearly state the aims and objectives of the work	2
	2 Describe the survey design	2
	3 Succinctly summarise the key scientific, methodological, and ethical facets of the field activity undertaken	1 2
	4 Accurately synthesise the ecological importance or conservation significance of the project;	3
	5 Communicate your interpretation of the material in a professional manner	2
	6 Answer questions appropriately in the context of animal ecology and conservation	2
	7 Make an active contribution to group work	2
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Communication, Collaboration, Problem solving, Organisation, Applying technologies, Information literacy	

### All - Assessment Task 3: Exam

<b>GOAL:</b>	Demonstrate your understanding of the key concepts and techniques in animal ecology and support your practice in animal ecology.	
<b>PRODUCT:</b>	Examination - Centrally Scheduled	
<b>FORMAT:</b>	An online exam based on the material covered in learning materials, tutorials and the field course.	
<b>CRITERIA:</b>	<b>No.</b>	<b>Learning Outcome assessed</b>
	1    Correctly identify and outline the key concepts of animal evolution, adaptations, and ecology as presented in the learning materials, tutorials and field course, and contained in supporting readings	1
	2    Demonstrate your knowledge of animal ecology	1
	3    Apply knowledge from learning materials and readings to solve unseen problems	1    3
<b>GENERIC SKILLS:</b>	Organisation	

## 7. Directed study hours

A 12-unit course will have total of 150 learning hours which will include directed study hours (including online if required), self-directed learning and completion of assessable tasks. Student workload is calculated at 12.5 learning hours per one unit.

## 8. What resources do I need to undertake this course?

Please note: Course information, including specific information of recommended readings, learning activities, resources, weekly readings, etc. are available on the course Canvas site– Please log in as soon as possible.

### 8.1. Prescribed text(s) or course reader

Please note that you need to have regular access to the resource(s) listed below. Resources may be required or recommended.

REQUIRED?	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	EDITION	PUBLISHER
Recommended	Smith, B, Waudby, H, Alberthsen, C, Hampton, J. (Eds)	2022	Wildlife Research in Australia	1	CSIRO Publishing

### 8.2. Specific requirements

You will be required to undertake field work in outdoor environments for up to three days. You will be required to wear covered footwear, hat, long-sleeved shirt and long trousers for field safety. Accommodation costs for these trips will be covered. Details of management and costs for food will be set out at the beginning of the trimester. Please discuss any financial hardship that might be associated with the field studies with the Course Coordinator.

## 9. How are risks managed in this course?

Risk assessments have been performed for all field activities and low to moderate levels of health and safety risk exists. Moderate risks may include working in an Australian bush setting, working with people, working outside normal office hours for example. It is your responsibility to review course material, search online, discuss with lecturers and peers and understand the health and safety risks associated with your specific course of study and to familiarise yourself with the University's general health and safety principles by reviewing the [online induction training for students](#), and following the instructions of the University staff.

## 10. What administrative information is relevant to this course?

### 10.1. Assessment: Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is the ethical standard of university participation. It ensures that students graduate as a result of proving they are competent in their discipline. This is integral in maintaining the value of academic qualifications. Each industry has expectations and standards of the skills and knowledge within that discipline and these are reflected in assessment.

Academic integrity means that you do not engage in any activity that is considered to be academic fraud; including plagiarism, collusion or outsourcing any part of any assessment item to any other person. You are expected to be honest and ethical by completing all work yourself and indicating in your work which ideas and information were developed by you and which were taken from others. You cannot provide your assessment work to others. You are also expected to provide evidence of wide and critical reading, usually by using appropriate academic references.

In order to minimise incidents of academic fraud, this course may require that some of its assessment tasks, when submitted to Canvas, are electronically checked through Turnitin. This software allows for text comparisons to be made between your submitted assessment item and all other work to which Turnitin has access.

## 10.2. Assessment: Additional Requirements

### **Eligibility for Supplementary Assessment**

Your eligibility for supplementary assessment in a course is dependent of the following conditions applying:

- (a) The final mark is in the percentage range 47% to 49.4%; and
- (b) The course is graded using the Standard Grading scale

## 10.3. Assessment: Submission penalties

Late submissions may be penalised up to and including the following maximum percentage of the assessment task's identified value, with weekdays and weekends included in the calculation of days late:

- (a) One day: deduct 5%;
- (b) Two days: deduct 10%;
- (c) Three days: deduct 20%;
- (d) Four days: deduct 40%;
- (e) Five days: deduct 60%;
- (f) Six days: deduct 80%;
- (g) Seven days: A result of zero is awarded for the assessment task.

The following penalties will apply for a late submission for an online examination:

Less than 15 minutes: No penalty

From 15 minutes to 30 minutes: 20% penalty

More than 30 minutes: 100% penalty

## 10.4. SafeUniSC

UniSC is committed to a culture of respect and providing a safe and supportive environment for all members of our community. For immediate assistance on campus contact SafeUniSC by phone: [07 5430 1168](#) or using the [SafeZone](#) app. For general enquires contact the SafeUniSC team by phone [07 5456 3864](#) or email [safe@usc.edu.au](mailto:safe@usc.edu.au).

The SafeUniSC Specialist Service is a Student Wellbeing service that provides free and confidential support to students who may have experienced or observed behaviour that could cause fear, offence or trauma. To contact the service call [07 5430 1226](#) or email [studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au).

## 10.5. Study help

For help with course-specific advice, for example what information to include in your assessment, you should first contact your tutor, then your course coordinator, if needed.

If you require additional assistance, the Learning Advisers are trained professionals who are ready to help you develop a wide range of academic skills. Visit the [Learning Advisers](#) web page for more information, or contact Student Central for further assistance: +61 7 5430 2890 or [studentcentral@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au).

## 10.6. Wellbeing Services

Student Wellbeing provide free and confidential counselling on a wide range of personal, academic, social and psychological matters, to foster positive mental health and wellbeing for your academic success.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email [studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentwellbeing@usc.edu.au) or call 07 5430 1226.

## 10.7. AccessAbility Services

Ability Advisers ensure equal access to all aspects of university life. If your studies are affected by a disability, learning disorder mental health issue, injury or illness, or you are a primary carer for someone with a disability or who is considered frail and aged, [AccessAbility Services](#) can provide access to appropriate reasonable adjustments and practical advice about the support and facilities available to you throughout the University.

To book a confidential appointment go to [Student Hub](#), email [AccessAbility@usc.edu.au](mailto:AccessAbility@usc.edu.au) or call 07 5430 2890.

## 10.8. Links to relevant University policy and procedures

For more information on Academic Learning & Teaching categories including:

- Assessment: Courses and Coursework Programs
- Review of Assessment and Final Grades
- Supplementary Assessment
- Central Examinations
- Deferred Examinations
- Student Conduct
- Students with a Disability

For more information, visit <https://www.usc.edu.au/explore/policies-and-procedures#academic-learning-and-teaching>

## 10.9. Student Charter

UniSC is committed to excellence in teaching, research and engagement in an environment that is inclusive, inspiring, safe and respectful. The [Student Charter](#) sets out what students can expect from the University, and what in turn is expected of students, to achieve these outcomes.

## 10.10. General Enquiries

### In person:

- **UniSC Sunshine Coast** - Student Central, Ground Floor, Building C, 90 Sippy Downs Drive, Sippy Downs
- **UniSC Moreton Bay** - Service Centre, Ground Floor, Foundation Building, Gympie Road, Petrie
- **UniSC SouthBank** - Student Central, Building A4 (SW1), 52 Merivale Street, South Brisbane
- **UniSC Gympie** - Student Central, 71 Cartwright Road, Gympie
- **UniSC Fraser Coast** - Student Central, Student Central, Building A, 161 Old Maryborough Rd, Hervey Bay
- **UniSC Caboolture** - Student Central, Level 1 Building J, Cnr Manley and Tallon Street, Caboolture

**Tel:** +61 7 5430 2890

**Email:** [studentcentral@usc.edu.au](mailto:studentcentral@usc.edu.au)